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May 13, 2004

The Honorable Whittington Clement
Secretary of Transportation
Commonwealth of Virginia
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Secretary Clement:

I am writing you at the request of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to provide comments to you and the members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board regarding the Public-Private Transportation Act proposal by Fluor Daniel for the development, financing, design, and construction of the Capital Beltway High Occupancy Toll lanes. The Board reviewed this matter at its December 8, 2003 and May 10, 2004, meetings and wanted to provide its strong support for the project including a viable transit component.

Many of the issues that we had raised in our July 31, 2002, letter regarding the Capital Beltway Study have been addressed by this proposal. One of the greatest concerns with the Beltway Study was the significant impact on approximately 300 homes and businesses. This proposal directly addresses our concerns by improving the mainline capacity while minimizing the takings to only six residences. Another was the development of alternative funding sources as a way to get the Beltway improvements moving in a more timely manner. The Board had suggested HOT lanes as a possible alternative. The need to provide improved transit between Springfield and Tysons Corner was identified as important to Fairfax County. The availability of additional lanes on the Beltway is an integral part of providing this type of transit service. Even the need for better pedestrian and bicycle access across the Beltway can be accommodated by providing sidewalks and trails on bridges when they are reconstructed.

The Board had the following additional comments for your consideration. These comments are made with the understanding that cost and impacts to homes, businesses and parks are considered, as well as transportation benefits in the decision making process.

Convenient and safe access points are an important component to a comprehensive transit and HOV network. These access points also provide another option for many Fairfax County residents who use the Beltway. While we acknowledge that further analysis is

required to determine the feasibility of various access points, the following should be considered by VDOT and the proposer:

- Access points should be provided in the Tysons Corner area, such as the one shown at Jones Branch Road, and the Merrifield/Dunn Loring area at Route 29. Additional access points at Route 123, Braddock Road, and Little River Turnpike should also be considered. While these should have transit access at a minimum, they should be evaluated to allow HOV and HOT traffic.
- It is important to make connections between the HOT lanes and existing and future rail stations to provide for transit connectivity.
- To make the HOV truly a regional network, direct connections need to be made to all HOV facilities. Access to the Shirley Highway HOV lanes by completing part of Phase VIII of the Springfield Interchange would provide a more direct access to the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station and as such should also be considered, either as a part of this project or as part of some other proposal.
- Access and transit options need be included as part of the detailed investment grade traffic and revenue analysis to be performed by the proposer.
- While additional access is necessary along the facility, how these access points fit into local roads and planned development needs to be considered.

Transit needs to be an integral component of the HOT lane initiative with an allowance for funding transit services included in the detailed investment grade traffic and revenue analysis to be done in the next phase of the PPTA process.

While the proposal has shown many options in response to access and safety issues, it has still kept to a minimum the impacts to adjacent property that is so important to Fairfax County.

The addition of collector-distributor roads to the Route 123 interchange and the modification of the weaving areas between the general purpose lanes and the HOT lanes address two of the safety concerns raised by Fairfax County.

As previously mentioned by the Board of Supervisors, the improvements proposed to the I-495/I-66 interchange may not be adequate to address the safety and capacity issues for traffic exiting onto and from I-66 outside the Beltway. The I-66 Multimodal Transportation and Environmental Study only extends to Cedar Lane and was to tie into the improvements that were to be done by the Capital Beltway project. These improvements to I-66 should be considered with the others proposed under the HOT lane project.

The need to provide adequate noise walls is essential to any improvement to the Beltway. Noise walls should be placed in accordance with appropriate federal requirements.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be placed wherever opportunity exists as part of roadway bridge reconstruction and/or construction of access points while minimizing impacts to adjacent property.

We request that the County continue to be involved on issues of concern to the citizens of Fairfax County during the next stage of the PPTA process, especially during discussions on the scope of the project, access points, and other design and traffic operational issues.

We appreciate being an active participant in the early stage of the PPTA proposal evaluation. We believe the County's involvement in the PPTA process has had a productive and positive effect on the project proposal review.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly, Chairman
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

GEC:YHC:lw

cc: Members, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Philip A. Shucet, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Transportation
Karen J. Rae, Director, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Thomas F. Farley, District Administrator, Virginia Department of Transportation
Young Ho Chang, Director, Fairfax County Department of Transportation